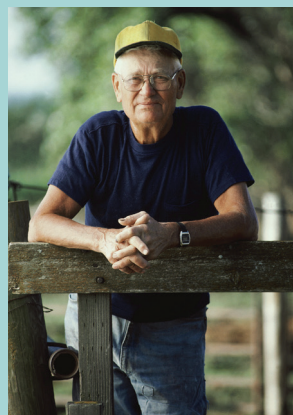




Human **Relations** Commission



2016
Annual Report

2016 Annual Report

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Commissioners

Chair

Joel Trambley, MD, PhD

Vice Chair

Jessica Nare

Mayoral

Monica Bauer

Dion Brown

Shana Hazan

Gagandeep Kaur

Jessica Nare

Lorena Slomanson

Patrick Hovakimian

Council

(1) Faye Detskyweil

(3) Joel Trambley

(4) Tinesia Conwright

(5) Dolores Canizales

(6) Susan Thomson Tschirn, PhD

(7) Steph Groce

(8) Keryna Johnson

(9) Godwin Higa

Student Commissioner

Lillian Shallow

Danell Scarborough, Ed.D / Joel Day, Ph.D

Executive Director

Mike Giorgino / Greg Halsey

Deputy City Attorney

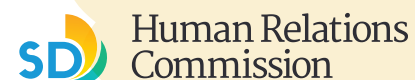
Message from Commission Chair



San Diego has long been synonymous with temperate climate and sunny beaches. In recent years, we have become known for our innovations in biotechnology and craft beer. As we come into our own as a global city, it is time to highlight another of San Diego's assets: our diversity. With Tijuana, Mexico, just across the border, we are part of a truly bi-national metropolitan area. We are home to some of the largest Pan-Asian communities in America, have welcomed refugees from a number of countries, and were the first city to name

a street after LGBT hero Harvey Milk. The City of San Diego Human Relations Commission advises the Mayor and City Council on issues of equality and inclusion. We are proud to have worked on issues that unify and uplift our citizens, including fighting human trafficking, continuing a march toward more restorative justice practices, and ensuring family and gender inclusive restrooms. The Commission is also working with our elected leaders to ensure that new San Diegans can succeed here regardless of the path to their new home. The Human Relations Commission believes that diversity is what brings us together, not what separates us. We ask for the continued help of San Diegans in supporting our efforts, and hope that visitors respect and enjoy the inclusive atmosphere of world class city for all.

Joel Trambley





Overview of the Human Relations Commission

What is the Human Relations Commission?

The City of San Diego established the Human Relations Commission (HRC) in 1991 to advocate for equal opportunity and the prevention/elimination of discrimination citywide. The HRC was originally a 15 member commission but was increased to 17 members with the addition of an appointment from Council District 9 and an additional Mayoral appointment. The HRC advises the Mayor and City Council on methods to ensure that all residents of the city have equal access to economic, political and educational opportunities, equal access to accommodations in all business establishments in San Diego, and equal service and protection by public agencies.

Mission of the Human Relations Commission

The mission of the City of San Diego Human Relations Commission is to conduct and promote activities that foster mutual understanding, respect and inclusion, to protect basic human and civil rights and to create an atmosphere that promotes amicable relations among all members of the San Diego community.

Commission's Statement of Purpose

We are a volunteer commission, chartered by the Mayor and City Council of San Diego to inform and advise them on civil and human rights issues. We solicit, inform, and advocate for causes of social, economic, and racial justice and equality.

*We **advocate** for mutual respect amongst the diversity of San Diego's communities.*

*We **collaborate** with community leaders and organizations that align with the HRC vision.*

*We **educate** the City, elected officials, appointed officials, and the public on issues affecting our diverse inhabitants.*

*We **investigate** ways to help diverse communities know each other, understand strengths and challenges, and empower all to work together to make our City vibrant.*

*We **mediate** cases of discrimination and bias.*



Meeting Schedule and Agendas

The HRC meets monthly on the third Wednesday of the month from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. All meetings are open to the public. The meeting location moves throughout the community depending on the topic or outreach initiative. Meeting agendas and minutes are posted on the HRC's website <http://www.sandiego.gov/human-relations>



II. 2016 Highlights

Commission Priority Issues

Each year the HRC holds a Planning Retreat to identify concerns in the city that the Commissioners select to focus their work around for the coming year. Committees then organize actions and activities to address these issues. A Planning Retreat, open to the public, was held on Feb. 20, 2016. The Commission heard a presentation on the City of San Diego's Strategic Plan and discussed ways to support the goals. These priority issues were identified for 2016:

- **Global Perspective**
- **Access to Basic Needs**
- **Governing for Equality and Diversity**
- **Communications**
- **Commission Awards**

► Global Perspective

Following the Mayor's goals, in helping the City's identity as a "Mega Region," the Global Perspective Committee investigated the possibility of establishing an Office of New San Diegans to assist immigrants and refugees who recently call San Diego home. The committee also strongly supported maintaining an open "Friendship Park" at the United States-Mexico border.

The HRC is a member of the San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium. As a member of the Consortium, HRC has been part of many initiatives in which committee members attend the second Monday of every month from 5 to 6:30 p.m. to discuss initiatives. The committee also met with the Latino Advisory Committee and Mayor Kevin Faulconer, promoting the idea of the Office of New San Diegans. Commissioner Bauer attended the Consortium meeting and noted that there are now four "Welcoming Cities" in San Diego County: Chula Vista, Encinitas, Solana Beach and Lemon Grove. Monica Bauer served as chair of the Global Perspective committee along with commissioners Trambley, Brown, Shallow, and Slomanson.

► Access to Basic Needs

The access to basic needs dealt with issues concerning food, hunger, nutrition, justice, quality of life issues, affordable housing, homelessness, child care and early childhood education. It also collaborated with the Hunger Advocacy Network. Commissioner Godwin Higa was a big part of changing the name of a school from Robert E. Lee Elementary to Pacific View Leadership Elementary. The San Diego Unified School District provided LGBTQ awareness and education training for all staff. The committee invited the San Diego Japanese American Citizens League to make a presentation regarding educating the public on insensitive and demeaning terms, and invited the HRC to send an informational letter to a local business owner who markets products using derogatory terms. Keryna Johnson served as the chair of the Access to Basic Needs Committee, along with commissioners Gagandeep Kaur, Shana Hazan and Godwin Higa.



► Governing for Equity and Diversity

Governing for Equity and Diversity tackled issues related to environmental health and justice, hate crimes and hate motivated behavior, recruitment strategies and practices around the mentally ill for the San Diego Police Department, restorative justice, restorative practices, and informed education on trauma. The committee also continued collaborated with the San Diego Regional Hate Crimes Coalition. Godwin Higa served as the chair of the Governing for Equity and Diversity Committee, along with commissioners Tinesia Conwright, Stephen Groce, Lillian Shallow, Faye Detsky-Weil, Keryna Johnson and Jessica Nare.



► Communications

Communications focused on increasing communication and visibility from the Commission. Communications collaborated with the City of San Diego Communications Department and initiated a review of the website, updated social media, and worked to promote the work of the HRC in media. Dolores Canizales served as chair for the Communications Committee, along with commissioners Lillian Shallow, Keryna Johnson, Patrick Hovakimian, Joel Trambley and Monica Bauer.

Here are a few links about the work the Commission have done in communications for 2016:

“Our City Has Our Back”

Gay San Diego, Nov. 25, 2016

<http://gay-sd.com/our-city-has-our-back/>

“City of San Diego to honor San Diego Pride director of operations”

San Diego LGBT Weekly, Nov. 2, 2016

<http://lgbtweekly.com/2016/11/02/city-of-san-diego-to-honor-sd-pride-director-of-operations/>

“San Diego Gay Men’s Chorus’ Bob Lehman honored by City Human Relations Commission”

San Diego Gay and Lesbian News, Oct. 24, 2016

<http://sdgln.com/news/2016/10/24/sdgmcs-bob-lehman-honored-city-human-relations-commission>

► Commission Awards

The Commission Awards Committee facilitated the nomination, selection and recognition process for award recipients. Gagandeep Kaur served as the chair of the Commission Awards Committee, along with commissioners Nicole Murray Ramirez, Susan Thomas Tschirn, Jessica Nare, Lorena Slomanson and Joel Trambley.

Policy Recommendations

HRC advised the Mayor and City Council on issues within the jurisdiction of the Commission. The following letters were sent in 2016:

- **Letter to the Mayor regarding Support for Equity and Inclusion in Government (Sept. 19, 2016)**
- **Letter to School District Board and Superintendent (June 15, 2016)**
- **Letter to Mayor and Council Supporting AIDS Memorial (May 19, 2016)**
- **Mexican Consulate Expression of Concern and Support (July 16, 2016)**
- **Letter to San Diego Japanese American Citizens League (July 28, 2016)**

Representing the City/Commissioners Activities

► Community Events

Commissioners regularly attended community events, forums and activities representing the Commission and the City. A sampling of these include:

- National Student Affairs Conference in Indiana
- Poway Spring Festival
- Sexual Assault Awareness at SDSU
- Earth Day
- Teen Expo
- Day of Compassion
- Standing Together for Peace
- California Association of Human Relations Organizations
- Neighborhood Watch, Safe Family Expo
- AIDS Walk San Diego
- Dine Out for Life
- Rise Breakfast
- Las Mañanitas/Cesar Chavez Service Clubs Breakfast
- Harvey Milk Diversity Breakfast
- Martin Luther King Jr. Breakfast

► Collaborations and Connections

Commissioners also served as bridges to other boards and collaborations with similar goals. This provided a two-way exchange of information and the communication enhanced all our work. A sampling of the other community groups that Commissioners were actively involved with include:

- RJ summit
- First 5 California
- Foothold Foundation
- Hunger Advocacy Network
- Linda Vista Kindergarten Readiness Network
- Women Give San Diego
- Run Women Run
- Junior League of San Diego
- Jessie's Program
- San Diego LGBT Center
- San Diego Continuing Education Foundation
- Alliance San Diego
- America's Finest City Softball League
- Environmental Health Coalition (Fund Development Committee)
- County of San Diego Social Services Advisory Board
- San Diego Hate Crimes Coalition
- San Diego Interfaith Center for Worker Justice
- Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention
- International Affairs Board
- San Diego Interfaith Collaborative
- San Diego Interfaith Center
- San Diego County Human Trafficking Advisory Council
- Clairemont Town Council
- San Diego Police Department Captains Advisory Board
- Anti-Defamation League





Restorative Justice Summit

As a result of the Human Relations Commission (HRC) and the City's Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention educating themselves on the topics of restorative justice, restorative practices and trauma-informed care, the decision was made to host a summit to increase the community's awareness and understanding of these important approaches.

► The objectives of the summit became the vision:

- We will raise awareness about restorative justice and restorative practices and their advantages for our community including victims, offenders and society.
- We will encourage the use of restorative justice practices to repair harms and restore relationships, to build community, to reduce recidivism, to provide alternatives to prison, to support re-entry, to improve victim's experience in the justice system, and to save taxpayer dollars.
- We will acknowledge that trauma-informed services are an integral part of this approach.
- We will bring together community residents, victims, offenders, systems stakeholders, service providers, youth, adults, parents, faith and civic leaders, educators, law enforcement and criminal justice officers for learning and dialogue on how we move forward together.





On Feb. 26, 2016, **approximately 430 participants** representing community residents, victims, offenders, systems stakeholders, restorative justice and restorative practices experts and service providers, youth, adults, parents, faith and civic leaders, educators, law enforcement and criminal justice officers attended this summit.

Recognition and Awards

► The Ashley L. Walker Social Justice Award

This award was established to honor a former HRC Executive Director and longtime community activist, Ashley Walker. This award recognizes and honors an individual, group, business or community-based organization for their work in promoting peace, social justice, and human and civil rights in our community. The award is presented annually at the MLK All People's Celebration on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday. On Jan. 18, 2016, the commission was pleased to honor Samuel Valdez, a local playwright and director in San Diego who also serves on the board of Centro Cultural de la Raza in San Diego.

Samuel Valdez is a playwright, director and performer. The son of Mexican immigrants, he was born in Riverside, and currently lives in Tijuana, Mexico. Samuel graduated with a B.A. in theater from San Diego State University in 1991, with an emphasis on directing. He has directed a large number of Latino plays such as "Roosters" by Milcha Sanchez Scott, "The Conduct of Life" by Maria Irene Fornes, and "The Guitarron." With six plays to his credit, Valdez characterizes himself as a playwright. He directed and produced several of his individual works to include "Soy Yo/It's Me," "P13-Vive," and "Ambos/Both" (co-directed with Dora Arreola). His community involvement has been one of great effort and has helped him to create and direct his works. He is full of energy and ready to take the bull by the horns, to tackle theater creation once more. Valdez greatly enjoys his work as a playwright, director and performer because, as he puts it, "Theater is my life!"

► Keith M. Turnham Humanitarian Award

The Human Relations Commission has established an annual award honoring a former HRC Commissioner and dedicated community activist, Keith M. Turnham. This award recognizes and honors an individual or group who is a veteran and is involved in public and social services. They are honored for their military service to our country and for promoting human and civil rights in our community. **Awardee:** Bob Lehman

Bob Lehman, Executive Director of the San Diego Gay Men's Chorus, was given the eighth annual Keith M. Turnham Humanitarian Award. The award is named for Keith Turnham, a World War II veteran, former prisoner of war, LGBT community advocate, and former Human Relations Commissioner.

► Business Diversity Award

With this award, the Commission acknowledges a business or corporation for its focus on diversity and inclusion in its organizational philosophy demonstrated through its corporate leadership, employment policies, corporate giving and/or community initiatives. **Awardee:** Brown Law Group



The Brown Law Group received the Commission's Business Diversity Award in recognition of its commitment to diversity and inclusion in employment law.

► Commission Partner Award

With this award, the Commission acknowledges individuals and organizations who have worked in partnership with the Commission on priority issues over the last year. Collaborative efforts elevate the work of all involved, and the Commission is honored and proud to work in alignment with these partners.

Awardee: Immigration Rights Consortium

The San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium is a project of Alliance San Diego. Beginning in 2007, community, faith, labor, and legal organizations have come together as the Immigrant Rights Consortium. Through the Consortium, these organizations are pursuing four common goals:

- 1. Support comprehensive immigration reform;**
- 2. Stop the spread of local policies and practices that target and violate the civil and human rights of immigrants;**
- 3. Educate immigrants about their rights and the legal and other resources available to them; and**
- 4. Educate the public about the important contributions of immigrants and counter the myths and misstatements made about immigrants.**

The chair of this organization is Ginger Jacobs and the representatives are Laura Moreno, Maricela Amezola, Rev. Dr. William Jenkins, Carolina Ramos, Esmeralda Flores and Ramla Sahid.



► Human Relations Commission Commendations

The Special Commendation certificate honors individuals and organizations that foster mutual respect and understanding in cultural diversity, protect basic human and civil rights, and eliminate prejudice and discrimination in our community. **Awardees:** Terry Josiah, Michael Snyder, Fernando Lopez, Dr. William Jenkins, Debbie M. Martinez and Tracy Morris.

Terry Josiah, of Music.Life.Change.LLC, for his efforts to help shed light on domestic violence and misogyny;

Dr. William Jenkins, Director of the Christ Ministry Center, which has provided shelter to thousands of Haitian refugees in San Diego;

Michael Snyder, Founder of the Clairemont Mesa Education Foundation, which assists schools in acquiring equipment and resources;

Debbie M. Martinez, former Senior Program Officer for Youth and Peacebuilding at the University of San Diego's Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice, for her work providing successful role models in peacebuilding and human rights;

Tracy Morris of the Blue Heart Foundation, a program that provides mentoring, personal and professional development workshops, college campus tours and community building throughout San Diego; and

Fernando Zweifach Lopez Jr., Operations Director of San Diego LGBT Pride, for his consistent advocacy ensuring the struggles and stories of the LGBT community are ever visible.

Training and Conferences

The Commission receives regular training from City Attorney's Office on the California Brown Act and the Commission's responsibilities regarding open meetings and transparent decision making.

The California Association of Human Relations Organizations (CAHRO) is the state-wide organization that brings together the work of human relations organizations (commissions and community-based) up and down California. Former HRC Executive Director Danell Scarborough has served as chair of CAHRO for the past four years. The regional convenings and the annual statewide conference are educational and networking opportunities in which HRC Commissioners regularly participate. This year Commissioners participated in conferences in Oakland, Riverside and Los Angeles.

Complaints of Discrimination

The Human Relations Commission is authorized to accept, investigate, and mediate discrimination complaints. The HRC works with our assigned Deputy City Attorney to evaluate the validity of the discrimination. Where the complaint does not rise to the level of legal discrimination, the complaint is not within our jurisdiction (outside the City of San Diego), or mediation is not successful, referrals are made to more appropriate resource people and agencies in the community.

In 2016, 12 complaints were received and reviewed. All complainants were provided referral resources relevant to their specific area of concern. In two instances, action was taken to investigate the situation and to successfully resolve the complaint and remain ongoing cases. At the end of 2016, the submission form was changed to a 100 percent online fillable form. It facilitates the process of submitting a complaint for the citizens of San Diego can submit an electronic complaint anytime from any computer. It is a good way to gather information, reduce the need of papers, increase the number of complaints allowing HRC to be more informed about discriminatory actions that go on in San Diego, and HRC will be able to analyze the collected submissions forms much faster.

New Executive Director

Beginning in September, the City of San Diego welcomed Dr. Joel Day as Executive Director of the Human Relations Commission and the International Affairs Board. In this capacity, Joel supports city diplomacy efforts, manages and assists the HRC and International Affairs Board, represents the City to the many communities that call San Diego home, and advises the City on resilience to extremism and hate, human rights, inclusion, diversity, and global engagement. Day has a Ph.D. in International Affairs from the University of Denver and an M.A. in International Relations from the University of San Diego. He has taught at the University of Denver, Colorado State University, and the University of Massachusetts. Day has worked throughout settlements in the West Bank and with former civil war combatants in Sierra Leone. His work has been published in the Journal of Peace Research, Perspectives on Terrorism, and Journal of Strategic Security, and he has provided commentary to Congress, the Pentagon, and national news outlets including The Atlantic, Al Jazeera, the Boston Globe, and the Associated Press.





Human Relations Commission

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